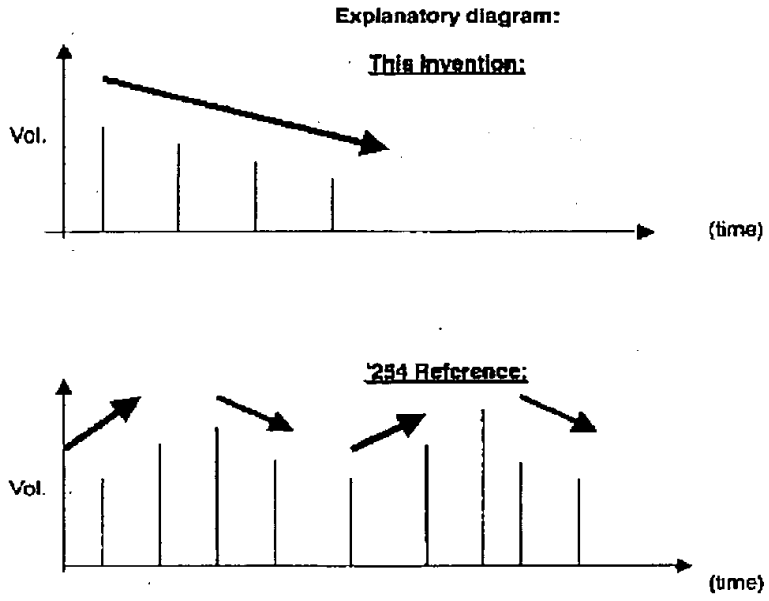
REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 6-8, 12-14 and 18-29 are now in this application. Claims 1-20 are rejected. Claims 3-5, 9-11, and 15-17 are previously cancelled. New claims 21-29 are added. Claims 1, 6, 7, 12, and 13 are amended herein to clarify the invention, and to address matters of form. For the convenience of the Examiner, APPENDIX I is provided herewith having a complete set of pending claims with all amendments effected therein. The following remarks supplement those of the Amendment filed January 12, 2004. Since the Examiner indicated that this Amendment did not appear one the system as of February 20, 2004, applicant submits herewith a copy of the Amendment for the Exmainer's convenience.

Claims 1, 7 and 13 were previously amended to relate the feature of the damping factor being associated with an event place and being selected based upon the association with the event place. The feature permits the echo produced to be customized according to the event place in which the event is taking place. Claims 1, 7 and 13 are now amended to recite that the echos are continuously reduced in volume throughout the echo process. This feature is not discussed in the '254 reference. Instead, the '254 reference teaches periodic increasing and decreasing of the magnitude of the sound for '254 reference. This difference is illustrated below.



Claims 21 through 29 are now added. Claims 21, 24, and 27 are directed to subject matter providing for a larger damping factor for outdoor events than for indoor events. Thus, echos are reduced in volume more when outdoors than indoors. Furthermore, claims 22, 25 and 28 are directed to the time delays being set larger for outdoor events than indoor events. And finally, claims 23, 26, and 29 are directed to the time delays and damping factors being set based on the size

of an event place when the event place is indoors. These features are also submitted as distinguishing over the '254 reference.

In light of the foregoing, the application is now believed to be in proper form for allowance of all claims and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 10-1250.

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APPENDIX I

ALL PENDING CLAIMS WITH AMENDMENTS EFFECTED THEREIN

1. (Currently Amended) A video game device comprising:

a monitor;

a display unit for displaying an event place where a specific event is performed on the monitor;

a sound output unit for outputting a background sound relating to the event;

a memory for storing a background sound data relating to the event;

an event place determining unit for determining types of event places; and

a background sound controller for reading out the background sound data from the memory, outputting it as a background sound and performing an echo process on the background sound in response to the type of the event place determined by the event place determining unit, the echo process producing echos of the background sound, said background sound controller including:

a delay setting unit for setting a time delay of successive ones of said echos of the background sound by selecting a time delay associated with the event place; and

a volume setting unit for setting volumes of said echos based on a damping factor associated with the event place such that

successive ones of the echos of the background sound are outputted from the sound output unit in continuously lower volumes throughout the echo process.

2. (Original) A video game device according to claim 1, further comprising a game selection unit for selecting one game program from a plurality of game programs stored in the memory and the specific event is carried out when one game program is selected from the plurality of programs stored in the memory.

3-5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A video game device according to claim 1, further comprising a main processor for performing a processing related to an execution of an event and a sound processor for performing a processing related to outputting a background sound, and the sound processor includes said event place determining unit and said background sound controller.

7. (Currently Amended) A background sound outputting method for a video game comprising the steps of:

displaying on a monitor an event place;

executing a specific event in the event place;

outputting from a sound output unit a background sound relating to the event;

determining a type of the event place;

reading the background sound data stored in a memory;

outputting the background sound data as a background sound; and

performing an echo process on the background sound in response to said determined type of the event place and outputting echos of the background sound, including:

setting a time delay of successive ones of said echos of the background sound by selecting a time delay associated with the event place; and

setting volumes of said echos based on a damping factor associated with the event place such that successive ones of the echos of the background sound are outputted from the sound output unit in continuously lower volumes throughout the echo process.

8. (Original) A background sound outputting method according to claim 7, further comprising the step of selecting one game program from a plurality of game

programs stored in the memory and the specific event is carried out when one game program is selected from the plurality of programs stored in the memory.

9-11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) A background sound outputting method according to claim 7, further comprising the steps of executing a main process for performing a processing related to an execution of an event and executing a sound process for performing a processing related to outputting the background sound, and when an order of outputting the background sound is issued by the main process, the sound process determines the type of event place and performs the echo process on the background sound in accordance with the type of the determined event place.

13. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable recording medium containing a background sound outputting program for a video game, the program comprising the steps of:

displaying on a monitor an event place;

executing a specific event in the event place;

outputting from a sound output unit a background sound relating to the event;

determining a type of the event place;

reading the background sound data stored in a memory;

outputting the background sound data as a background sound; and

performing an echo process on the background sound in response to said determined type of the event place and outputting echos of the background sound, including:

setting a time delay of successive ones of said echos of the background sound by selecting a time delay associated with the event place; and

setting volumes of said echos based on a damping factor associated with the event place such that successive ones of the echos of the background sound are outputted from the sound output unit in continuously lower volumes throughout the echo process.

14. (Original) A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 13, the program further comprising the step of selecting one game program from a plurality of game programs stored in the memory and the specific event is carried out when one game program is selected from the plurality of programs stored in the memory.

15-17. (Cancelled)

18. (Original) A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 13, the program further comprising the step of determining whether the echo process needs to be applied to the background sound outputted from the sound output unit.

19. (Original) A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 18, wherein the background sound which the echo process applies to is an announcing sound relating to the event.

20. (Original) A computer-readable recording medium according to claim 13, the program further comprising the steps of:

a main process for performing a processing relating to execution of the event; and

a sound process for performing a processing relating to the output of the background sound,

wherein a type of the event place is determined and the echo process is applied on the background sound in response to the determined type of the event

in the sound process step at a time when the background sound output command is issued in the main process step.

21. (New) The video game device according to claim 1 wherein damping factors associated with event places located outdoors are set greater than damping factors associated with event places located indoors such that successive ones of the echos for an event place located outdoors are reduced more in volume than successive ones of the echos for an event place located indoors.

22. (New) The video game device according to claim 21 wherein time delays associated with event places located outdoors are set greater than time delays associated with event places located indoors.

23. (New) The video game device according to claim 22 wherein time delays and damping factors associated with event places located indoors are set based on sizes of the event places located indoors.

24. (New) The method according to claim 7 wherein damping factors associated with event places located outdoors are set greater than damping factors associated with event places located indoors such that successive ones of the echos

for an event place located outdoors are reduced more in volume than successive ones of the echos for an event place located indoors.

25. (New) The method according to claim 24 wherein time delays associated with event places located outdoors are set greater than time delays associated with event places located indoors.

26. (New) The method according to claim 25 wherein time delays and damping factors associated with event places located indoors are set based on sizes of the event places located indoors.

27. (New) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 13 wherein the program has damping factors associated with event places located outdoors set greater than damping factors associated with event places located indoors such that successive ones of the echos for an event place located outdoors are reduced more in volume than successive ones of the echos for an event place located indoors.

28. (New) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 27 wherein the program has time delays associated with event places located outdoors set greater than time delays associated with event places located indoors.

29. (New) The computer-readable recording medium according to claim 13 wherein the program has time delays and damping factors associated with event places located indoors set based on sizes of the event places located indoors.